Navicella^ it seemed to her that the bark of the Church was placed upon her shoulders, and that it crushed her to death with its weight. Her disciples carried her back, in a dying state, and laid her upon her couch, from which she never rose again save once. " She lay in this way for eight weeks," writes Barduccio, " without raising her head, full of such intolerable torments from head to foot, that she of ttimes said : * These are not bodily or natural pains, but it seems that 1 have given leave to the demons to torment this body at their pleasure.' And, verily, it seemed surely that it was so ; for she endured the most grievous pains that were ever heard, and it would seem to me a profanation to tell you of her patience ; but this much will I tell you, that, when a new agony came, she raised her eyes with joy to God, and said : 'Thanks be to Thee, eternal Bridegroom, who every day dost newly grant such gifts and such graces to me, wretched woman, and Thy unworthy servant.' "

Tommaso Petra tells us how, hearing of her condition, he went to visit her, and found her lying upon the hard boards that formed her bed, in the room that had been transformed already into an oratory. He urged her to make her last will and testament, by prescribing a rule of life for all her disciples, that each might know what he or she should do after her death. " Leave us," he said," all rich in divine love by this last will and testament, for I am certain that this injunction that I lay upon you will be most pleasing to the Lord." * At his bidding, she summoned all her spiritual sons and daughters who were then in Rome, and delivered to them " a devout, notable, and fruitful discourse," of which one of those present has left an account in writing. It is, as it were, a summary of what, all through her life, she had striven to teach them by word and by deed : —

" In the first place, she said that, in the beginning of her spiritual life, she recognized that, in order to give herself entirely to God and to possess Him fully, it was first necessary to strip her heart and affection of every sensitive love of every creature and

[1] Tommaso Petra's letter to Fra Bartolommeo, with some slight variations, is included in both the *Supj>lementum* and the *Proewus.*